

## FINE PICTURES IN PARIS.

American Exhibitors at the Palace of Fine Arts in the Champs Elysees, is a triennial exhibition of the best works of distinguished living artists, mainly chosen from those admitted to the salons of the previous three years. The organization is controlled by the most distinguished artists of France, such as Meissonier and Cabanel, Bonnat and Bouguereau, so that no social nor political influence can avail to procure the admission of an inferior or unworthy production. From the immense number of paintings, many of which by no means of first class admitted to the annual exhibition, it had become the impression that in a republic every artist was privileged to exhibit his work regardless of his artistic merits. Now, at least, the artists have nothing of which to complain. Among the famous artists represented, Bouguereau has one picture, Bouguereau six, Meissonier seven, and Cabanel ten. These are mostly paintings of a large size. Meissonier, so famous for his exquisite pictures of diminutive size, seems determined to demonstrate to the world that his forte is paintings on a large scale. While undoubtedly superior productions, they lack something of the delicate spirit of his individual works.

But I wish more particularly to notice the American exhibitors, of whom there are six, Messrs. Bridgeman, Daniel Knight, Boggs, Masler, and Miss Louise Boni. One thing is noticeable in all their pictures. They are among the best efforts of the respective artists. In too many cases our artists have presented pictures painted hurriedly and without care, not properly or creditably representing themselves or their country. This should be reformed at once. An artist should do his "best work" for public exhibition. He has no right to make his fellow citizens ashamed of him or his country. Although these beautiful pictures—yes, beautiful all—do not in any sense represent American art, being decidedly after the modern French style, from which they cannot be distinguished, they are possessed of a decided individuality, and do not represent the style of their respective instructors. The head of the boy which Mr. Bridgeman exhibits reflects in no degree the manner of Jerome, neither does Daniel's dashing Spanish smugger recall Manet, although it is from the studio of that realistic genius. Frank Bozzi exhibits a very realistic as well as artistic view of the Place de la Bastille in rainy weather, which, with J. Ridgway Knight's "Un Denil," attracts much admiring attention. Miss Louise Boni has two cases, containing nine miniature portraits. They are very finely finished, delicate and beautiful, and extremely faithful to nature. An admiring crowd closely surround them constantly, and then, truly, an American's good-humor, whether in art or song, is becoming appreciated abroad, as well as at home. While our artists have not as yet established a distinctive American school of art, yet we are permitted to take just pride in their achievements thus far, and to believe in their eventual success and triumph.

Since the late tariff legislation fixing an ad valorem duty upon pictures by foreign artists imported into the United States, there has been a good deal of discussion in certain circles in Paris as to its propriety. It is generally condemned by the picture dealers, who say the law will be resented by the foreign artists, and will be resented abroad. This feeling is sympathized in by a few foreign artists, who occasionally send a picture to our shores for sale, and also, in a sentimental sort of way, by American artists and students who avail themselves of the facilities for study in Europe. They feel grateful for the privileges generously afforded them (not always without an equally liberal consideration in return), and naturally wish their foreign brethren treated liberally. But the law, as it stands, is not to the interest of the interests of art in America or entitles a mistaken impression. Any painting or statue imported into the United States for any public institution, gallery, or school of art is now, as heretofore, admitted free. This is in the interest of art among the people. But the rich men ostentatiously pay an enormous price for a foreign picture, ignoring the deserving American artist. He uniformly places his treasure in his private salon, or gallery, to be seen only by a few privileged friends, or exhibited on rare occasions at a fashionable party. It was as well, as a stranger's life, worth the gain admission to the salons of the late A. T. Stewart, a person who is privileged to view the magnificent decorations in the Vanderbilt and other costly New York, Boston, or Philadelphia mansions is fortunate indeed. Why should these men be privileged against taxation merely to the minister to the ostentation of their families, and gratify a few friends? When our rich men hold their artistic treasures for the benefit of art among the people, it will be time enough to advocate a change in our policy in this respect. Those who would open their galleries freely to the public, as is done by some Italian nobles and other foreign families, the case would be different. But if the sores wish to indulge in luxuries for their private gratification, let them pay for the privilege. I know of but one individual in the United States, besides Mr. Corcoran, of Washington, who constantly opens his galleries of paintings and statuary free to the public, and he resides in an obscure village in Michigan.

It is reported that Congressman Kelley, on his recent visit to Paris, promised somebody to give him a bill to amend the tariff to substitute the ad valorem clause in the tariff act, so as to provide for a specific duty of \$50 on each picture imported, with the idea of excluding poor copies and inferior pictures. There can be no objection to a prohibitory duty on dabs, but an enormous special tax on moderate works of merit would not serve the interest of art. The great mass of appreciative lovers of art are not endowed with superabundant wealth, and if they desire to induce their modest taste by purchase of a picture within their means, why should they be taxed more heavily than the more fortunate? Neither are the rich the only persons who purchase choice pictures; many a poor man from his savings buys a good picture. If this were not so artists and picture dealers would have a hard time, indeed. If some method could be devised discriminating in favor of really valuable works of art, and even excluding the utterly vicious and unworthy it would be well. But where is our art standard? What authority could be depended upon to decide the question between good and bad in art?

FERNANDO JONES.

**Customs Receipts at Georgetown.**  
The report of transactions of the Georgetown custom house for the month of October show the total collections for the month to be \$6,554.23, of which amount \$5,987.18 was for customs duties. On inquiring at the custom house as to the cause of the largely increased collections, it was found that it was due to the fact that our merchants and others who have occasion to import goods are taking advantage of the so called "preferential transportation" of July 10, 1882. By which, in the observance of certain formalities, they can have the goods brought directly through from the ports of arrival, without delay in better condition, and at considerably less expense to the importer than under the old law. For the year 1882 the receipts were \$3,770.96, and for the year previous \$2,307.43.

**Nights Scientific School.**

The director of the geological survey will on Monday next establish a night school in the survey building for the instruction of the young men employed in field work. The school will be under the supervision of the professors of Columbia college, and is designed to furnish a basis of scientific knowledge for those employed as assistants to the gentlemen engaged in this outside work in order that they may understand why certain service is required of them. The young men employed in outside work will be required

## The Trades.

**WON'T GIVE ONE DOLLAR TO BE MADE A DEMOCRAT.**  
A little, old man stumbled into the corridor of the city clerk's office yesterday and sought one of the messengers. After a wheezy cough he wiped his nose with a red handkerchief.

"Please wear do I go ter git naterlized; at present I am an Irish citizen?"

"Go in there," said the messenger, pointing to the office. The little man went in as directed, and approaching the desk made known his wants. The clerk began to draw up the necessary papers and said "one dollar, please."

"An' what fer?"  
"Why the cost of issuing the certificate?"  
"There ye stop now. If this country charges me one dollar for a votin' of the democratic ticket, I'll be a furrier all me days!"

**SKINNY MEN.**  
"Wells' Health Renewer" restores health and vigor, cures Dyspepsia, Impotence, Sexual Debility. \$1.

**FORT STEVENSON, D. T., Mar. 28.—Rev. James McArt says:** "Brown's Iron Bitters cured me of severe dyspepsia."

## WEST WASHINGTON.

Condition of the Potomac river water at all points, 30.

There were 3,400 bushels of wheat sold yesterday at from \$1.10 to \$1.14 per bushel, and 600 bushels of corn at 64 cents per bushel.

A very pleasant round surprise party was given yesterday night at the residence of Mr. Curtis Dangler, No. 3255 Prospect avenue, to his daughter, Miss Susie, and her niece, Miss Bessie Oertley, in which a large number of the young people of this place participated. Music was furnished by Cole's band, and a delightful time was had in dancing until 3 o'clock the next morning. The piano furnished a splendid set out, which was highly appreciated by the guests. The young hostesses were indefatigable in their efforts to entertain their friends, and were entirely successful in this. The present wife, Mrs. Hill, and daughter, Mrs. Welch, Mrs. Hurley, Mrs. Sebastian, the Misses Emma Powell, Isabel Robinson, Lena Hogan, Knight, Rosie Finney, Lizzie Denison, Minnie Powell, Maggie Thomas, and Ida Hopkins; Misses Wm. Potter, Wm. H. Robinson, Porter Rowzee, Thomas Finney, Clarke Farr, John Noonon, Charles Renshaw, Charles Proby, Charles Smith, Sam Poore, Frank Ager, Harry Green, Charles Tribbley, Will Robinson, John Sanger, and Albert Pooro.

## ADVERTISED LETTERS.

The following is a list of advertised letters remaining in the Washington city postoffice Saturday Nov. 3, 1883.

**TO obtain any of these letters the applicant must call for advertised letters.**  
**TO get any of these letters within one month they will be sent to the dead letter office.**

**FRANK B. CONGER, Postmaster.**

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